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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/063,227	04/20/1998	JESUS W. CASAS-BEJAR	P-7109	4100

27581 7590 02/19/2003

MEDTRONIC, INC.
710 MEDTRONIC PARKWAY NE
MS-LC340
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55432-5604

EXAMINER
THISSELL, JEREMY

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3763	

DATE MAILED: 02/19/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/063,227	Applicant(s) SCHROEDER ET AL.
	Examiner Jeremy T. Thissell	Art Unit 3763

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *27 November 2002* .

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *13-19,24,27,29,33,34,36-39,41,43 and 44* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *13-19,24,27,29,33,34,36-39,41,43 and 44* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 27 November 2002 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> **A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –**
>
> (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 13, 15, 16, 24, 27, 29, 33, 34, 36, 39, and 41 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Helmus et al (US 5,447,724).

Helmus teaches all the claimed subject matter including an implantable medical device (col. 3, line 31), having a tissue-contacting surface formed of polyurethane or silicone (col. 2, lines 41-42) which has a drug such as heparin (col. 6, line 51) or a steroid (col. 6, line 55) intimately mixed into it (col. 4, lines 20-24 and col. 9, lines 45-46), wherein the drug makes up 2% by w ight of the material (col. 7, lines 57-62).

Note that col. 7, lines 57-62 indeed specify the OUTER layer, not th reservoir layer. In col. 7, lines 57-62, Helmus teaches that the agent in the outer layer is put there to produce a "gradual release effect" alluding to the slower release of the agent at first from the outer layer and gradual increase in the release rate as the more concentrated stores of the same agent start to seep through the outer layer from the inner reservoir layer. Since this teaches that the agent in the outer layer can be the same as in the inner layer, Helmus' teaching of the reservoir agent being a steroid (col. 6, line 55) is interpreted as referring to physiologically active agents in BOTH the reservoir and outer layer.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> **(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.**

Claims 37, and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Helmus et al (US 5,447,724).

Helmus teaches all the claimed subject matter except for the slightly lower concentrations in claims 37 and 43. Helmus teaches 2% of the material is the drug, whereas the claims call for a maximum of 1%. In a tissue-contacting wall of a catheter, the amounts of a drug that are needed to achieve a desired release rate vary somewhat

based on the specific material that the drug is being mixed into, and also how the catheter was formed (i.e. extrusion process, etc.). Therefore, the examiner takes the position that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to vary the weight percentage of a drug such a small amount in order to achieve a desired release rate depending on the polymer being used and the manufacturing process (temperature, curing, etc) used to make the catheter.

Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chait (US 5,727,555) in view of Helmus et al (US 5,447,724).

Chait teaches a catheter having an external fitting coupled to the proximal end, and helical coils as claimed. However, Chait lacks a layer with anti-inflammatory agent in it. Helmus teaches an elongate body-inserted member with an anti-inflammatory agent imbedded in the tissue-contacting surface as discussed supra. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to form the catheter of Chait with the layered structure of Helmus in order to reduce inflammation in the treatment area, since formation of catheters with layers and with drug-saturated layers is well known in the art of catheters.

Claims 17-19, 38, and 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Helmus et al (US 5,447,724) in view of Fearnot et al (US 5,609,629).

Helmus teaches all the claimed subject matter except for the steroid being a glucocorticosteroid such as dexamethasone. Fearnot teaches the use of

dexamethasone in a drug embedded outer layer of a catheter. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use dexamethasone as taught by Fearnot as one of the steroids broadly mentioned by Helmus (col. 6, line 54-55) since dexamethasone is a well-known anti-inflammatory steroid, and as demonstrated by Helmus it is known to use it as the bioactive component of a bioactive surface on a catheter.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 27 November 2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argued that Helmus does not teach a tissue-contacting layer with a drug intimately mixed in it. Applicant argues that the outer layer is porous and thus drugs within the pores are not "intimately mixed" in the material. However, the material of the outer layer does have a drug intimately mixed therein (col. 4, lines 23-24). It ALSO has pores to allow MORE drug from the reservoir to pass therethrough. Applicant also argued that the high temperature manufacturing processes like thermal extrusion would preclude the desired composition of drug/polymer. However, thermal extrusion is not the only process by which Helmus' invention can be made. Col. 4, line 23 teaches simple molding.

With regard to the issue of inherency. The examiner merely said that it is inherent that the drug in the outer layer is a steroid. It is inherent because Helmus teaches that the drug in the outer layer is the same as that in the reservoir. Then

Helmus teaches that the drug in the reservoir is a steroid. Ther fore, it is inherent that the drug in the outer layer is a steroid.

With regard to the weight percentages of the drug, the examiner disagrees and refers to the rejection for discussion of motivation to slightly vary the amount of drug.

Applicant also argued that the combination of Chait with Helmus lacks motivation. In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or **in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art.** See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, it is well-known in the art of medical devices, particularly catheters for their surfaces to have agents deposited therein (as demonstrated by Helmus). Catheters are well-known to have all kinds of drugs in their surfaces, including antibiotics and anti-coagulants such as heparin. In view of this common knowledge in the art, one of ordinary skill would have been motivated to use an agent-releasing surface such as that of Helmus on the catheter of Chait, for all the benefits that drugs can provide in such an environment.

Applicant argued that the principles of operation of Fearnot and Helmus are that of a porous layer. First, as discussed above, Helmus is not merely a porous layer. Second, the mechanism of Fearnot is not relevant. Fearnot is used for a teaching of an agent-releasing surface on a medical device having a particular agent.

Conclusion

This is a RCE of applicant's earlier Application No. 09/063,227. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the earlier application and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action if they had been entered in the earlier application. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action in this case. See MPEP § 706.07(b). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no, however, event will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Contacts

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeremy T. Thissell whose telephone number is (703) 305-5261. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-7:00 Monday through Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Casler can be reached at (703) 308-3552. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9302 for regular communications and (703) 872-9303 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1148.

jt
February 6, 2003

BRIAN L. CASLER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700